

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Southern District of Texas

United States Courts
Southern District of Texas
FILED

JUN 14 2017

United States of America

v.

Willie Joe Sowell
A.K.A. Willie Joe Robinson

Case No.

H17-968

David J. Bradley, Clerk of Court

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of June 5, 2017 in the county of Harris in the
Southern District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

Offense Description

Title 18 USC, Section 844(e)

Threatening Communications

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attached affidavit.

☐ Continued on the attached sheet.



Complainant's signature

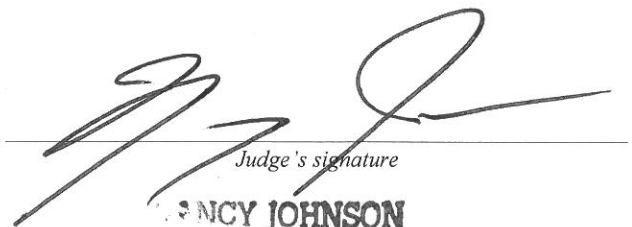
Christopher Petrowski, Special Agent, FBI

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: 06/14/2017

City and state: Houston, Texas



Judge's signature

NANCY JOHNSON

United States Magistrate Judge

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, Christopher Petrowski, being duly sworn, do hereby depose and state:

I am a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), duly appointed according to law and acting as such. I have been a Special Agent with the FBI for twenty two (22) years, and I am currently assigned to the FBI, Houston Division's Violent Crime Task Force (VCTF). The VCTF is a joint FBI and Houston Police Department Task Force responsible for the investigation of among other violent crimes, kidnapping, bank robbery, extortion, serial murder, and Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution.

Since this Affidavit is made for the purpose of supporting a Criminal Complaint, I have not set forth each and every fact learned during the course of this investigation. Rather, I have set forth only those facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause for the crimes charged. Unless otherwise indicated, where actions, conversations, and statements of others are related herein, they are related in substance and in part only.

Based on the facts set forth in this affidavit, there is probable cause to believe that violations of Title 18, United States Code, Section 844 which states:

Whoever—

(e) through the use of the mail, telephone, telegraph, or other instrument of interstate or foreign commerce, or in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, willfully makes any threat, or maliciously conveys false information knowing the same to be false, concerning an attempt or alleged attempt being made, or to be made, to kill, injure, or intimidate any individual or unlawfully to damage or destroy any building, vehicle, or other

real or personal property by means of explosive.

PROBABLE CAUSE

1. On June 5, 2017, at approximately 8:59 am, Clerk, Hortencia Lerma received a telephone call at the Bob Casey Federal Building located at 515 Rusk, Houston, Texas 77002. As indicated on the caller identification display, the originating number of the call was 423-946-4394. The caller stated, "This downtown courthouse? My name is Anthony Johns. It's a bomb in that courthouse. Y'all better get out of there; there's a bomb in there. You gonna blow up." The call was recorded. Deputy United States Marshal [DUSM] Regino Quintero was assigned to secure the facility and search for a bomb.
2. On June 5, 2017, at approximately 9:09 am, 9:29 am and again at 9:36 am the caller made similar threats to the Harris County Commissioners Court, located at 1001 Preston, Houston, Texas. The originating number was 423-946-4394. These calls were not recorded. Deputy Investigator Rick A. Moreno, Harris County Constable, Precinct 1 was assigned to investigate the threat at the Commissioners Court.
3. On June 5, 2017, at approximately 9:42 am, DUSM Quintero requested the assistance of DUSM Nash with an explosive sniffing canine to determine the presence of explosives in the Bob Casey Federal Building. DUSM Nash was not available so DUSM Quintero requested assistance from Harris County Constable's Office canine units. DUSM Quintero was advised that the Constable's Office canines were actively searching for explosives at the Harris County Commissioners Court and were not available.
4. On June 5, 2017, at approximately 10:10 am, DUSM Quintero received a call from Officials at the Harris County Constables Office, who investigated the threatening phone

calls to the Commissioners Court, stating they believe the threatening telephone calls originated from the same number, 423-946-4394 and same caller, after talking to the person who received the threat.

5. On June 5, 2017, Investigator Moreno contacted Special Deputy Mike Rone of the Houston Police Department, Criminal Investigative Division, whose special training is in the tracking of communication devices. Investigator Rone advised Investigator Moreno that phone number 423-946-4394 has Sprint Mobile as a service provider. Your affiant also checked an internal FBI cellular service provider data base and confirmed that Sprint is the service provider for that 423-946-4394.
6. On June 5, 2017, Investigator Moreno submitted an exigent circumstance claim to Sprint Mobile for telephone number 423-946-4394, to obtain subscriber and geolocation information. Investigator Moreno learned that the account was a “pre-paid” account with the only subscriber information being “Sandra Jones”. The geolocation information received from Sprint for the target device at 9:45 pm was provided in the form of latitude and longitude. The latitude and longitude for the target device was 35.81495/-88.89825. These coordinates are located within the city of Humboldt, Tennessee.
7. On June 6, 2017, Investigator Moreno contacted Lieutenant Tony Williams, Humboldt Police Department Criminal Intelligence Division to explain the series of bomb threats made to the courthouses in Houston, Texas. Lieutenant Williams advised that he learned of a bomb threat to a federal courthouse located in the city of Boise, Idaho at 4:15 pm. Humboldt Police Department had been contacted regarding the bomb threat in Boise, Idaho and the name “Tamika Wright” had been used in regards to this threat. The originating number was 423-946-4394, the same number for the threats to the Harris

County Courthouses. Investigator Moreno compared the geolocation information for the target device at 4:15 pm and found that the device using 423-946-4394 was located at 35.81477/-88.89828.

8. On June 7, 2017, Investigator Moreno observed within the target phone call records provided by Sprint that the telephone number 214-438-9852 with a subscriber of "Tamika Wright". On same day, FBI Taskforce Officer Joe Ambrogio, Garland Police Department interviewed a Tamika Wright at 5821 MacGregor Drive, Garland, Texas 75043 regarding the bomb threat investigation.
9. Tamika Wright stated she knew the person utilizing telephone number 423-946-4394 as "Willie Joe Robinson". Tamika Wright stated that she has never met Willie Joe Robinson in person but had been communicating via cellular telephone with him for several weeks. Tamika Wright provided to FBI TFO Ambrogio, a photograph Willie Joe Robinson sent to her via text of himself, Willie Joe Robinson.
10. On June 8, 2017, Special Agent Joseph D. Upton, Memphis Division, Jackson Resident Agency made inquiry at the Humboldt Police Department regarding Willie Joe Robinson. Investigators determined that an individual known as "Willie Joe Sowell" closely matched the description of "Willie Joe Robinson". A comparison of a booking photograph of Willie Joe Sowell was compared to the photograph provided by Tamika Wright. A National Crime Information Center [NCIC] report indicated Willie Joe Sowell uses an alias of Willie Joe Robinson. Sowell resides with his sister Shirley Robinson at 2818 Ward Drive, Humboldt, Tennessee. NCIC records also indicated that Willie Joe Sowell had previously been arrested on March 14, 2001 for harassment by phone. In 2001, Sowell pleaded guilty to two counts of Harassment by phone.

11. On June 8, 2018 at approximately 2:45 pm, Tamika Wright contacted Ambrogio and stated she received a call from the person she knows as Willie Joe Robinson. Robinson stated he had changed his cellular number to 731-664-8526.
12. On June 12, 2017, FBI TFO Ambrogio met with Tamika Wright and played the voice recording of an unidentified person calling in a bomb threat to the Bob Casey Federal Courthouse in Houston, Texas. Tamika Wright stated, "Yes. That's him." Tamika Wright listened to the recording a second time and said, "Yes. No doubt, that's him." FBI TFO Ambrogio then asked if this is the same voice as the person you know as Willie Joe Robinson. Tamika Wright responded, "Yes."
13. On June 14, 2017, Special Agent Scott Lawson interviewed Shirley Robinson, sister of Willie Joe Sowell. Robinson stated she had two listed numbers for Sowell. One number was 423-946-4394 but her most recent contact with Sowell was to another number not further identified.
14. On June 14, 2017, Special Agent Scott Lawson interviewed Willie Joe Sowell subsequent to Sowell's arrest for violating the terms of his sex offender registration. After hearing the voice recording bomb threat to the Bob Casey Federal Courthouse in Houston, Texas, Sowell admitted he called that courthouse and said it was the only one. Sowell then admitted that he "called some other numbers". Sowell explained he made the call while he was at a "cookout". Sowell stated he would "google" courthouse numbers and call to report bombs in that area, know that to be false. Sowell further stated he knows Tamika Wright and that he met her online.

Based on all the forgoing information and facts, I believe there is probable cause to believe Willie Joe Sowell, also known as Willie Joe Robinson

- engaged in conduct with the intent to convey false or misleading information under circumstances where such information may reasonably be believed and where such information indicates that an activity has taken, is taking, or will take place that would constitute a violation of chapter 40 of this title in violation of Title 18 United States Code 844(e).



Christopher Petrowski
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 14 day of June, 2017.



United States Magistrate Judge
NANCY JOHNSON
United States Magistrate Judge